

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 2 and 4-6 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 5 are amended, claim 3 is canceled and claim 6 is added. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representatives by Examiners Lofdahl and Rowan at the interview held July 31, 2003 are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicant's record of the interview.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Wiebe (U.S. Patent No. 4,398,369). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As agreed during the personal interview, Wiebe does not disclose or suggest a reel seat for a fishing rod wherein a tip portion of an area of the front surface of the trigger on which a user's fingers can be placed is positioned behind a portion immediately below the highest position of an opening portion of a rear hood, as recited in independent claims 1 and 5. Accordingly, Applicant asserts that claims 1 and 5 and dependent claims 2 and 4 define patentable subject matter. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) be withdrawn.

As also agreed during the personal interview, Wiebe does not disclose or suggest a method of gripping a fishing rod comprising the step of placing at least two fingers on a trigger. Accordingly, Applicant asserts that claim 6 defines patentable subject matter.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 2 and 4-6 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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